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DELICIOUS HOMEMADE LIQUEURS ARE INFUSED WITH LOVE

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CORRECTION: PUBLISHED CORRECTION RAN TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1994

*A recipe in the Nov. 1 issue of The Oregonian's FOODday for a replica of Bailey's Irish Cream listed too little sugar. If you have already made the recipe but not used it yet, the additional 1/2 cup of granulated sugar may be added now. The corrected recipe follows.

TEXT:

PEPPERMINT LIQUEUR Makes about 4 cups

1 cup water
2 cups granulated sugar
1 teaspoon peppermint extract
1 1/2 cups brandy
- Approximately 1/2 teaspoon green food coloring
In a saucepan, combine water and sugar and stir gently. Heat over medium-low heat until sugar dissolves. Cool.

Stir in peppermint extract, brandy and enough food coloring to make the syrup the color of creme de menthe. Pour into a clean, dry decanter or bottle.

Seal and shake. Store in a cool, dark place -- allow to mellow 7 days before using.

From ``Gifts from the Pantry' by Annette Grimsdale

VANILLA CORDIAL Makes 5 1/2 cups

Start this 1 to 2 months before you want to use it, to give the flavor time to develop. Vanilla Cordial, used as a liqueur in France, is interchangeable with vanilla extract and is a welcome present for any baker. Buy fresh vanilla beans from health-food or gourmet shops where they are sold in long glass tubes or folded in jars. The beans should be soft and very fragrant. Return any beans that are dried out and stale.

4 or 5 vanilla beans, at least 5 to 6 inches long, each cut into 4 pieces
4 cups vodka
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup water
1 vanilla bean, left whole, for packaging
Split each vanilla bean piece lengthwise with a sharp knife. Put the pieces in a clean, dry bottle that has a tight cap. Add vodka, cap the bottle and shake well.

Store the bottle in a place where you will remember to shake it every few days. Let it steep 2 to 3 weeks; shake it several times a week. A sniff and a taste will help you judge when it is ready.

Filter the extract into a clean, decorative bottle, using a kitchen funnel lined with a coffee filter; discard vanilla bean pieces.

Make a sugar syrup by boiling sugar and the water together until the sugar is completely dissolved, 2 to 3 minutes. Cool completely.

Add the sugar syrup to the bottled extract and shake well. Add the whole vanilla bean and cap tightly. For best results, the extract should be allowed to mature for 1 month before using.

From "Gifts of Food," by Susan Costner

ORANGE RATAFIA Makes 6 cups

The term ratafia, often used loosely for any fruit-flavored liqueur, is thought to have derived from the Renaissance custom of drinking a toast on the ratification of an agreement or treaty. Using Armagnac gives a woodsy taste. It takes about a month for the flavor of the ratafia to develop fully.

4 cups Armagnac or cognac

- Juice of 6 oranges, about 1 1/2 cups

- Zest of 4 oranges, cut into strips (no white pulp)

1 cup granulated sugar

1 cinnamon stick

Place Armagnac, orange juice, orange zest, sugar and cinnamon stick in a clean, dry jar or bottle with a tight-fitting lid. Store the jar in a place where you will remember to shake it every few days. Steep 3 to 4 weeks, shaking it several times a week.

After steeping, discard the cinnamon stick and orange zest. Filter the ratafia into a clean, dry bottle using a funnel lined with a paper coffee filter. Cap tightly before storing.

From "Gifts of Food" by Susan Costner

ANISE LIQUEUR Makes 4 cups

Anise is said to be nature's favorite flavor -- think of fennel, chervil, tarragon and licorice, for a start -- and the best uses for anise are all, happily, alcoholic. For licorice lovers, package this infusion in a tissue-wrapped bottle tied with licorice ropes.

1 teaspoon sesame seed

3 tablespoons anise seed

3 cups vodka

1 1/4 cups granulated sugar

1 cup water

Combine sesame and anise seed in a clean quart jar. Add vodka. Cover the jar tightly. Let stand 10 days, shaking the jar occasionally. Strain by pouring through a funnel lined with a paper coffee filter into a clean decorative bottle or decanter.

Combine the sugar and the water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve sugar. Boil 2 minutes and remove from heat. Let stand 10 minutes. Combine the syrup with the liqueur. Age at least 10 days before giving.

From "Cooking for Giving" by Bert Greene and Phillip S. Schulz<

MEXICAN COFFEE LIQUEUR Makes about 6 cups

Kahlua is a complex liqueur. We do not recommend using brown sugar or just vodka. We think you will agree this recipe is an accurate resemblance of classic Kahlua. It's ready in 2 to 4 months.

2 cups water

1/4 cup plus 2 teaspoons instant coffee granules or powder (see note)

3 1/2 cups granulated sugar
1 vanilla bean, split
2 3/4 cups vodka
3/4 cup brandy
1/4 teaspoon chocolate extract
1 drop red food coloring

Heat water in medium saucepan. When hot, add coffee granules and stir until dissolved. Add sugar and vanilla bean, stirring well to combine. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Immediately reduce heat so a very low boil is maintained for 1 minute. Remove from heat and cool to lukewarm.

Pour vodka and brandy into container. Add the cooled coffee mixture and the chocolate extract. Stir well. Cap and let age in a cool, dark place for 3 weeks.

After initial aging, strain liqueur through a cloth-lined wire-mesh strainer over a large bowl. Repeat until desired clarity is reached. Stir in food coloring. Pour into clean, dry bottles, cap and let age an additional 1 to 3 months.

Note: Use a freshly opened jar of coffee for best results.

From "Classic Liqueurs" by Cheryl Long and Heather Kibbey

GRAND ORANGE-COGNAC LIQUEUR Makes about 2 cups

Grand Marnier is a classic orange liqueur to be savored. While ordinary brandy can be used, we recommend a good cognac or French brandy for best flavor. Ready in 5 to 6 months.

1/3 cup orange zest (see note)
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 cups cognac or French brandy
1/2 teaspoon glycerin (see note)

Place zest and sugar in a small bowl. Mash and mix together with the back of a wooden spoon or a pestle. Continue mashing until sugar is absorbed into the orange zest and is no longer distinct. Put into a container and add cognac. Stir, cap and let age in a cool, dark place 2 to 3 months, shaking monthly.

After initial aging, pour through fine-mesh strainer placed over medium bowl. Rinse out aging container. Pour glycerin into aging container and place cloth bag or coffee filter inside strainer. Pour liqueur back through cloth bag or filter. Stir with a wooden spoon to combine. Cap and age 3 more months before serving.

Note: Authentic Grand Marnier uses bitter Haitian oranges to produce its classic flavor. You may use any type of orange peel you wish; however, a bitter type, such as Seville, is preferred for authenticity.

Note: Glycerin is available at pharmacies.

From "Classic Liqueurs" by Cheryl Long and Heather Kibbey

SEE CORRECTION: H&C'S IRISH CREAM LIQUEUR Makes about 3 cups

In our testing, we found that Bailey's Original Irish Cream was one of the most difficult liqueurs to reproduce. We finally got it -- so good, so inexpensive, so quick and easy! Ready in just 1 week. Must be kept refrigerated; use within 3 months.

2 eggs (see note)
1 1/3 cups evaporated milk
1/2 teaspoon chocolate syrup
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1/3 teaspoon lemon extract
1/4 teaspoon instant coffee granules

1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 3/4 cups Irish whiskey

Place eggs, evaporated milk, chocolate syrup, vanilla, lemon extract, coffee granules, sugar and whiskey in blender; blend well. Bottle and let mellow in refrigerator at least one week before serving. We found this best after 1 to 2 weeks. Store in refrigerator. Liqueur may be served at room temperature by pouring into glasses an hour or two before serving.

Note: This recipe calls for uncooked eggs. Be sure to use clean, uncracked eggs. Because of the possibility of salmonella, we would not recommend this recipe for people in a high-risk group for contracting food poisoning. This group includes the elderly, the chronically ill, pregnant women or others with a weakened immune system.

From ``Classic Liqueurs'' by Cheryl Long and Heather Kibbey

CRANBERRY CORDIAL Pictured on the cover Makes 4 cups

2 cups superfine sugar (see note)

2 cups vodka or gin

6 whole cloves

1 strip orange zest

4 cups fresh cranberries (a 12-ounce package plus 1 cup)

Mix sugar and vodka in a nonmetallic container that has a tight-fitting cover; stir to blend. Add cloves and orange zest.

Finely chop cranberries in a food processor fitted with a metal blade or in a food grinder. Mix into the sugared vodka; stir to blend.

Cover and store in a cool place, shaking or stirring once a day for 2 weeks.

Strain the mixture through a fine sieve, pressing to extract all liquid. Pour into clean, dry quart jar or into smaller bottles; seal at once.

Store in a cool place.

Note: You can make superfine sugar by placing granulated sugar in a blender container and processing until fine; measure before using.

From ``The Gift-Givers Cookbook'' by Judith Choate and Jane Green.

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